The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to its industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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REGISTER! VOTE! ELECT A BETTER CONGRESS!

WHOLE NO. 1846 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 1944 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 36, NO. 35

LABOR, USA

Washington, D. C.—The eighth edition of the American Federationist-of the Air, broadcast on the "Labor, USA" program over the American Broadcasting Company network, included the following outstanding feature articles to supplement the news:

Slave Labor in Europe

By HERBERT THATCHER
Associate Counsel for the AFL

Recent disclosures that millions of workers in Europe are still being condemned to slave labor have shocked the free trade union movement of this country.

It is estimated that Great Britain is still employing more than a million citizens of enemy nations at forced labor, with an even greater number shackled under involuntary servitude in France. But the figures for Soviet Russia far outstrip all the others combined. Forced labor in the Soviet Union exceeds the entire working population of the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Such conditions are intolerable from both moral and practical aspects. They menace world peace and destroy world trade. That is why the American Federation of Labor insists that immediate action be taken to abolish slave labor throughout the world.

The United States has proposed an international conference on Trade and Employment and has prepared proposals to stimulate the free flow of trade among the nations. One of these proposals states, in a negative way, that individual nations shall not be prevented from adopting or enforcing sanctions against prison-made goods.

The Bernard Act does not go far enough. Our own law is far more sweeping. The Tariff Act of 1930 bars from importation into this country any articles or merchandise manufactured wholly or in part by convict labor, forced labor or indentured labor. "Forced Labor" is defined in the same law as all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty for its non-performance and for which the worker does not offer himself voluntarily.

Obviously if slave labor is allowed to continue unchecked in Europe and if this law is enforced, our foreign trade with the nations of Europe is bound to be crippled. In the kind of world forchadowed by the Charter of the United Nations, trade and economic relations between all countries should be free and mutually supplementary. That is the way to maintain a prosperous and a peaceful world.

Yet, unless forced labor is outlawed, competition between free and slave labor might grind down all trade and production to the dangerously low level that might lead to another war.

Therefore, the American Federation of Labor calls upon the United States Government to propose to the United Nations that all member nations renounce the use of forced labor and agree to bar the products of forced labor from trade.

We also insist that Congress, before voting increased capital to the Export-Import Bank, write in a condition outlawing the repayment of credits in goods produced wholly or in part by prison, slave or forced labor.

The Rights of Employers

By LEWIS G. HINES
Legislative Representative of the AFL

A movement is already on foot to amend the National Labor Relations Act in the next session of Congress. Reactionary interests have set in motion a well-organized drive to modify the law for the professed purpose of protecting the rights of employers. They say that the law, as it stands, is onesided, that it gives labor many privileges but imposes no responsibilities on unions and that it denies to employers even such elementary rights as freedom of speech.

Well, let's see what all the shouting is about.

First of all, let me say that the American Federation of Labor does not believe in denying to employers any rights or privileges which any other American citizen enjoys. The workers of this country do not want to be the beneficiaries of any unjust or one-sided law. So we have carefully examined the charges of the opposition and we find that while their propaganda is cleverly stated, it does not square with the facts.

There are two major attacks being leveled at the National Labor Relations Act. The first is the speech for employers. It is contended that the law forbids employers to speak to or to communicate with their employes directly regarding wages, conditions of work or the question of whether or not they should join a union.

These contentions are completely untrue. There is nothing in the law to prevent any employer from talking in his workers about those matters. In fact, almost every employer does. The only restraint in the law is that the employer must not attempt to intimidate or coerce his workers. The purpose of this provision is to prevent aggression and violence directed against the free will. It was to correct such oppression that the National Labor Relations Act was passed. We are certain that the American people do not want to restore to employers the unrestricted right to use force against the American workers.

The second suggested amendment would give employers the right to ask the National Labor Relations Board to conduct elections among their employes. They have this right now. But the board reserves the right not to call an election at the request of employers who have failed to give a fair chance to organize the workers. The purpose of this amendment is to force the hand of the National Labor Relations Board and to permit employers to freeze out organization of their workers by refusing to recognize unions.

You may remember that when the National Labor Relations Act was passed more than a decade ago it was called the magna carta of labor, guaranteeing industrial democracy and freedom of American workers. It is still that. The real purpose of those behind the campaign to amend the law now is not to improve it, but to render it a mere, ineffectual scrap of paper.

The Decontrol Board's Decisions

By ROBERT J. WATT
Member of the National Wage Stabilization Board

Any disappointment felt by labor and the nation's consumers over the decisions announced this week by the Decontrol Board must be tempered by the realization that nothing better could be expected from such an agency under the mandate it received from Congress.

The very name of the board should have been the tip-off on the policy it would adopt. It is called the Decontrol Board, not the Decontrol Board. It was ordered by Congress to remove price controls, not to enforce them.

Therefore, its action in abolishing controls on grain and dairy products should not be considered surprising. The fact that the board has decided will force the American people to pay more for some of the basic necessities of life for months to come.

True, the board did reinstate price controls on meat and certain scarce vegetable oils. But consumers will find very little comfort in these rulings, for the new ceilings which will be imposed by the OPA are bound to be higher than those that prevailed when price control lapsed on June 30.

It is about time we all faced the fact that we cannot look to the Government for help or relief from inflation. As of today it looks as if we are on our own. It is completely powerless to reduce prices. It cannot even maintain prices at present levels if production costs increase. Under the law passed by Congress all we can hope for from the OPA is to prevent prices from running away entirely.

So far as the nation's workers are concerned, the price squeeze is aggravated by the Government's rigid freeze of wages. Recent decisions of the National Wage Stabilization Board and Reconversion Director John Steelman have barred wage adjustments even in hardship cases. The Government has served notice that it intends to adhere strictly to the wage pattern laid down last Spring and will not budge from it.

Under the circumstances, the American Federation of Labor has become completely disillusioned with bureaucratic control of prices and wages. We look forward anxiously to the day when such controls can be wiped out entirely. That day will come only when production is increased enough to meet demand. For that reason, the seven million members of the American Federation of Labor are now bending all their efforts to boost production in every direction.

Women's Work Conditions Reported Improving Steadily

Washington, D. C.—Working conditions for women throughout the Nation are being improved steadily, the Women's Bureau of the Labor Department reported after a survey, but at the same time pointed out that it found shortcomings in State laws which should be corrected now that the war is ended.

Most States have without some legislation regulating women's employment, the report stated, and history has established that these laws, based originally on "altruistic principles," have come to be respected for practical and economic reasons.

"Studies and experiments carried on for the most part by private agencies since the first World War," the report said, "have demonstrated that a reasonable hour schedule and desirable working conditions are sound from a business or financial point of view. Also, they are 'a good business proposition.'"

However, in the view of the Women's Bureau, laws in many of the States are not comprehensive enough. It recommended for all women workers a basic 40-hour week with overtime beyond that to a maximum of 48 hours in a week.

It recommended also the following: A maximum 8-hour day, one day of rest in every seven consecutive days, a minimum 30-minute lunch period where food is available on the premises and a longer period elsewhere, and a rest period of at least 10 minutes in each four-hour or half-day work period without extension of daily work hours.

"Establishment of legal hour standards which would allow time not merely for recovery from fatigue but for mental and spiritual growth would be highly beneficial to workers themselves and to society as a whole," it said.

The report stated that only about a third of the State hour laws limit hours of women in some occupations to eight a day. No State law sets a maximum workday shorter than eight hours and only three States have a legal maximum work week of less than 48 hours for manufacturing plants in peacetime.

Veterans' Housing Plan Crippled By W-E-T Bill Failure, Wyatt Says

South Bend, Ind.—The veterans' housing program has been "seriously crippled" by the failure of the recent Congress to pass the Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill, Housing Expediter Wilson W. Wyatt declared in an address before the National Conference of Catholic Charities in session here.

Discussing the bill, which would have provided a long-range housing program, Wyatt told the delegates:

"It wish we could tell veterans that we are doing eve'ything possible to get them places to live in, if only that was a vital part of the veterans' program, a tool that we relied upon to get the homes we are promising returning veterans need."

The long-terms housing bill, Wyatt told a press conference, would have permitted a start on 2,700,000 new dwelling units by the end of next year. This legislation was strongly supported by the AFL.

Wyatt's sharp condemnation of Congress came as the National Association of Real Estate Boards made public a survey among realtor-builders which, the organization said, showed the Nation's housing program had "bogged down."

The report of the realtors, issued in Washington, D. C., painted a dismal picture of the present housing situation and the outlook for the future. It declared that completions of private homes by private builders in the first six months of 1944 will represent only 15.9 percent of the units started. The report was based on 688 replies from 360 cities and towns scattered throughout 44 States.

Jap Labor Is Progressing Along American Pattern

Tokyo—A basic labor law aimed at the elimination of the "evils of feudalism" from Japanese labor has been drafted by the Welfare Ministry. It features an 11-hour day, 48-hour week, minimum wage levels, a ban or hiring children under 15 and the employing of women or workers under 18 for night jobs in mine pits.

The tentative draft of the new labor charter follows by only a few days the final report of the labor advisory committee to Gen. Douglas MacArthur's headquarters, which paid high tribute to the progress made in the field in Japan since American occupation. It noted, however, that "much remains to be done."

"Remarkable progress has been made in removing certain evils of labor organizations, establishing basic rights of labor and otherwise implementing basic reforms," the report said, "but matters of top priority have received primary attention."

Recommendations for the attainment of long-range objectives included the broadening and strengthening of basic labor legislation, and the thorough overhauling" of the nation's labor administration machinery. The report also suggested abolition of both the public and unions on "the functions of labor unions, the nature of collective bargaining and the importance of labor legislation."

The committee approved the labor disputes adjustment bill now before the Diet (Parliament) as setting up proper procedure for conciliation, mediation and arbitration. It found the trade union law a "practical success," but felt that it does not provide a clear-cut set of rules to govern labor relations.

The report described manpower as "Japan's only plentiful resource" and emphasized the necessity of its effective use. It recommended a strong public work program.

"The advancement of labor is one of the best guaranties against any future revival of militarism and aggression," the committee said.

U. S. APPEALS TO POLAND FOR FREE LABOR PARTY

Washington, D. C. — The United States has called upon the Polish provisional government to give the Labor and Peasant parties, and all other democratic and anti-Nazi groups a free voice in the political campaign for the elections slated for November 1 and to remove recently imposed restrictions.

Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson said the note cited "administrative practices" of the Polish Labor Party, which was not allowed to hold public meetings, and to take steps taken to deprive the Polish Peasant Party of its right to assemble and to carry on party functions. It pointed out, also, the war suffering of the Polish people and their right to select the government under which they would live.

Moscow press dispatches reported, has filed a similar protest against "grave irregularities" by Polish leaders in the province taken from a referendum held in Poland June 30.

U. S. LABOR GROUPS INVITED ON TOUR OF ARGENTINA

Washington, D. C.—Plans to invite a group of American labor leaders to Argentina to see how labor unions function in that country were announced by Dr. Oscar Ivanissevich, Argentine ambassador, following a conference with Secretary of State Cordell Hull.

The ambassador said he would ask the AFL to nominate prospective visitors from its organization.

Further plans outlined by Dr. Ivanissevich, his government would provide a place for the mission, which would be known as the Lincoln Mission, and would be greeted by J. M. Freire, Minister of Labor. The itinerary would include visits to the chief manufacturing areas, conferences with union leaders and a tour of ranches and wheat farms to observe conditions of farm labor.

AFL leaders had no immediate comment on the proposal.

11% OF 40,000 EMPLOYERS VIOLATED LOW PAY LAW

Washington.—In a recent discussion Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach announced that 4,000 wage-hour inspectors found minimum wage violations in 11 percent of the 40,000 establishments investigated during the past year. He urged that the present 40-cent hourly minimum should be increased.

Stating that 40 cents an hour "is only 3832 for a full year's work at 40 hours a week," Secretary Schwellenbach contended that it was erroneous to assume, as many people do, that "wage earners no longer need the law's protection." He argued that even with the 25 percent increase in old-age insurance grants recently put into effect, "these sums are wholly inadequate."

BLS ECONOMIST WRITES OF LABOR'S PART IN OPA

Washington, D. C.—John L. Ahrs, an economist in the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, is the author of an 8-page article published in the current issue of the "American Political Science Review" on the subject of labor participation in the OPA.

The article embraces an account of the origin, structure, functions and achievements of the OPA policy office. National Policy Board Committee, local labor advisory groups, labor members on local war price and rationing boards and labor liaison officers.

AUTO PARTS GO UP

Washington, D. C.—OPA announced that manufacturers' ceiling prices for all automotive replacement parts have been increased by amounts ranging from 2.5 percent to 20.8 percent over base date freeze prices.

RECORD INCOME FOR 1945

Washington, D. C.—Average per capita income of individuals in the United States in 1945 reached an all-time record of $1,150, the Commerce Department reported. This compares with $575 in 1940 and marks a 9 percent rise over the 1944 level of $1,133.

REVIVED OPA PLANS VIGOROUS DRIVE ON BLACK MARKETEERS

Washington, D. C.—Plans for a vigorous campaign to stamp out black markets under the revived OPA program were being drafted by OPA officials for application throughout the Nation.

Price Administrator Paul Porter pledged "the toughest program yet" to prevent black marketeers from nullifying the rolled-back meat ceilings slated to become effective September 9.

The new regulations are being drawn to tighten the control machinery, it became apparent to observers here, through a great flood of price increases would be permitted under the hotly-debated Bailey-Taft amendment to the OPA Extension Act.

Agency heads indicated they expected to issue soon the OPA interpretation of the amendment, which requires it to grant 1940 profits on manufactured items instead of using the lower 1936-39 earnings yardstick, which applied previously.

Some cotton and textile firms, after a study of the proposed showings of proof and eligibility required to get a price increase, are reported to have decided they would not attempt to qualify.

The new Extension Act states that no price increase need be granted if a "reasonable" profit already is being made and if the increase would help bring about added production. Under the OPA interpretation, such a provision would permit payment to 15 percent within six months.

Publication of the new meat ceilings was reportedly delayed by a controversy between OPA Chief Porter and Agriculture Secretary Anderson. Porter had planned to roll back meat ceilings to the June 30 level, but Anderson is said to have insisted that livestock prices should be increased $2 per hundredweight above the June 30 point.

Meanwhile, OPA removed ceilings on canned-and frozen soups, explaining this was necessary to bring effective Act because current and future supplies appear adequate to meet needs of domestic consumers.

In another move, described as one of its greatest strokes against black marketing, OPA counts raided the automobile market in Leesville, S. C., and Charlotte, N. C., and a nationwide organization spread over 14 States which cheated buyers out of some $250,000. Ten arrests were announced after the OPA agents bought five cars.

This market, the agents said, was the "richest" they had found. Persons from North Carolina, Virginia, the District of Columbia, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Kentucky, Louisiana, South Carolina, Florida and Pennsylvania. The raid followed complaints of evGIs, some of whom reported prices were $3,200 above OPA ceilings.

LIFE STORY OF M'GUIRE FEATURE OF LABOR DAY

New York City.—The dramatized story of "The Life of Peter McGuire," founder of Labor Day, will be presented on Labor Day, Monday, 10-10:30 noon (EST) over the Mutual Broadcasting System. It will originate in the studios of Station WOR in New York.

Ira M. Ornburn, secretary-treasurer of the AFL Union Label Trades Department, which is sponsoring the program, will give a brief address.

Meanwhile, plans for the Label Trades' big show, to be held in St. Louis, Mo., from Oct. 29 to Nov. 3, are gaining momentum each day. The third convention of the American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries of Labor will be held there at the same time. Leading figures of the stage, screen and radio have already made public appearances at the Labels show.

FIRST PENALTY INVOKED IN UNAUTHORIZED PAY CUT

Washington, D. C.—The Wage Stabilization Board has invoked its first penalty for a wage increase in cut wages without prior approval of the WSB in violation of the wage stabilization law.

The Board announced that it had disallowed $6,000 of wage payments by the Gaylord Container Corp. of St. Louis, Mo., from Oct. 29 to Nov. 3, 1943, and ordered the wages back to the level of Oct. 3, 1942. The Board found that the company had failed to pay a year-end bonus in 1945, an unauthorized wage payment. It continued two rent periods of ten minutes each and reduced the wages of an individual employe, all without prior approval.

BAKERS IN PHILADELPHIA GET 18½-CENT PAY HIKE

Philadelphia.—Announcement of a wage increase of 18½ cents an hour for 1,850 bakery employes in this city was made by Local 6, Bakery and Confectionery Workers (AFL). The new contract, it was reported, "is the best in many plants of the Nation," covers wages during the July 1, 1947, and is retroactive to August 1.

Bakers' wages are increased from $1 to $1.18½ cents; unskilled male helpers from 77½ to 96 and unskilled women workers from 56 to 74½ cents. In addition the union members received $10 each from the union strike fund as partial compensation for lost wages during the July 1-7 work stoppage which preceded the agreement.

Atom Plants Victory Spurs Drive of AFL Through Southland

Catholic Action Urges Further Gains for Labor

Washington, D. C.—Looking back with "gratitude and satisfaction" over the gains made by organized labor in the last 50 years, the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, in a special Labor Day message, called for an unremitting campaign for new benefits for the American worker.

At the same time it sharply condemned efforts thro gh legislation to weaken or destroy the gains registered by labor through long years of struggle for basic rights.

"At least for the immediate future," the statement said, "labor, together with all other fair-minded groups in America, must be extraordinarily vigilant to prevent the enactment of vengeful anti-labor legislation on both the Federal and State levels. It would indeed be tragic were the legislative gains of recent years to be weakened or emasculated in a fit of postwar hysteria."

The statement called upon both labor and management alike to fulfill their obligations to each other for the common good.

Pointing out that legislation alone "cannot and will not get to the heart of the difficulty" confronting labor and management, it did, nevertheless, urge immediate enactment of the following five-point legislative program:

1. Extension of the coverage and enlargement of the benefits of minimum wage legislation on both the Federal and the State levels.

2. Extension of the coverage and the benefits of social security legislation.

3. Extension of effective public control legislation until the danger of inflation has subsided.

4. Provision of adequate housing in cooperation with private interests.

Vets Get Billion In Jobless Pay

Washington.—The Veterans Administration has made public the following: A total of 1,000,000 veterans of the World War II have collected $1,065,920,144 in unemployment allowance payments since the beginning of the program in September, 1944. However, 99 percent of those receiving payments did not remain on the rolls long enough to exhaust their benefit rights—which, at the maximum is 52 weeks at $20 a week.)

The VA also reports that former servicemen have chosen to settle for cash rather than go into court against veterans suing for their old jobs—more than $221,000. By the cash settlement method, 300 veterans have collected an average of $1,250 each.

The agency said that there was an increased tendency to settle reemployment rights cases by mutual consent, a sharp increase in the number of cases now in the hands of United States attorneys. During July the number of cases increased to 1,500 which were referred to U. S. attorneys. Out of the cases decided on since July, 1944, 78 have been in favor and 25 against the veterans.

PRICE BOOSTS GRANTED ON FIVE BUILDING ITEMS

Washington, D. C.—Increased ranging from 5 to 10 percent on five scarce items in building material were granted by OPA.

Retail ceilings on the following items were boosted to conform to a provision of the new Price Control Act which requires that dealers get the same percentage profit margin as on March 31, 1946.

Stock millwork, up 10 percent; pine stock millwork up 8 percent; stock screen doors and other stock screen garage doors.

A 10 percent increase was granted to manufacturers of cast iron enameled plumbing fixtures. They are permitted to pass on the full percentage of increase to their customers.

FARM MACHINERY OUTPUT CLIMBED TO 13% IN 1945

Washington.—The Census Bureau disclosed that production of farm machinery and equipment in 1945 was valued at 768 million dollars, an increase of 13 percent over the 679 million reported for 1944. Manufacturers' sales showed an increase of 14 percent during the same period.

The Census Bureau also reported increased exports of wheat, corn, coal and industrial machinery, which accounts for the increase in the value of domestic imports from $815,000,000 in May of this year to $858,000,000 in June. Except for the rise in industrial machinery exports in June, shipments of finished machinery for the whole would have fallen below May.

Many Locals Reporting Substantial Gains In New Contracts

Atlanta, Ga. — Spurred by their smashing victory over the CIO in the National Labor Relations Board election at the Oak Ridge, Tenn., atomic energy plants, leaders of the American Federation of Labor's Southern Campaign intensified their drive to seal their triumph at the approaching run-off election.

The showdown at the atom plants was the first major contest between the two organizations since inauguration of the AFL campaign to enroll one million new members in the South. Approximately 10,000 men and women employed in the three plants are eligible to vote in the selection of a collective bargaining agent.

The Oak Ridge victory came as George L. Googe, director of the Southern Organizing Campaign and chairman of the AFL's Southern Policy Board, reported the AFL in the Southern area is signing up 10 new members to every one enroling in the CIO.

One notable reason for this overwhelming difference, Mr. Googe said, is the superiority of the AFL's bargaining techniques. a

"Without strikes or other upheavals, and within the approvable price regulations, our unions are doing a masterly job of raising wage standards," he said. The price achievement for a single week goes to the Hod Carriers' Building and Common Laborers' International Union.

"John S. Turner, general southern representative of this union, reports that he has received Wage Adjustment Board approval of hourly rate increases for Columbus, Ga., Jackson, Tenn., and Mobile, Ala., laborers' locals."

The elections in the atom energy plants saw 3,622 votes cast for the AFL and 3,081 for the CIO. The runoff is necessitated because many workers voted against affiliation with any union and will be permitted now to vote yes or no for one of the two.

A simple majority of all the workers will be required in the final balloting. In view of the wide margin registered by the AFL over the CIO, AFL organizers expressed confidence of ultimate victory by even a more impressive majority than was scored in the initial vote.

The report of Mr. Turner on the success of the Hod Carriers' and Laborers' drive in the three Southern cities revealed the approved wage increases range from 10 to 20 cents an hour, and that the average raise will be 15 cents.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Teamsters' southern drive reported further notable gains in their campaign.

In Chattanooga, Tenn., the Teamsters negotiated an agreement covering the city's street and sewage workers and providing wage increases ranging from 10 to 15 cents an hour, vacations with pay and paid holiday overtime. Approximately 160 workers are affected.

Teamsters in Arkansas reported gains over the entire State, both in signing of new contracts containing wage increases and in the winning of NLRB elections.

In Tampa, Fla., they signed a new contract with the Florida Phosphate Co., carrying a substantial pay raise, holidays with pay and paid vacations, and in Paducah, Ky., an agreement was signed covering employes of the Federal Mineral Co., with a 10-cent-an-hour pay boost and other improvements.

GEORGE RE-ELECTED HEAD OF P. O. CLERKS

Milwaukee, Wisc.—Leo E. George, veteran president of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks, was re-elected to the national presidency of the organization here. E. C. Hallbeck was elected legislative representative, a post he has filled since the death in March of William I. Horner.

Other officers elected in Juded Williams, executive secretary-treasurer; John M. Yorks, assistant secretary-treasurer.

Vice presidents, Herman Goldstein, New York City; J. Cline House, Oklahoma City; John E. Dugan, Portland, Me.; R. I; John F. Bowen, New Orleans; John F. O'Connor, Oakland; Cyril T. Blakeney, Cleveland; Robert J. Dan M. Dunn, Sioux City, Iowa; Oscar T. Whitesell, Greensboro, N. C.; Harry Hartman, Cleveland; Robert J. Rogers, Milwaukee, and William McGrath, Scranton.

Previously, the union had only nine vice presidents, but this number was raised to 11. Goldstein, formerly second vice president, was advanced to succeed Warren W. Harvey of Omaha, elected to the national presidency, and William H. Gunther for a place in the vice presidential group.

The delegates selected Miami for their next convention, approved a retirement plan for national officers, condemned Communist infiltration in the American labor movement and adopted a legislative program embracing a 30-hour week and a wide range of other issues.

AFL VICTOR IN ELECTIONS IN TWO VERMONT PLANTS

Boston.—AFL President William Green has felicitated Leo J. Murphy, AFL regional director for New England, on victories in elections in the A. G. Spalding & Bros. and the C. F. Church Manufacturing Co. plants in Brattleboro, Vt.

In the Spalding plant 123 of 185 workers eligible to vote selected the AFL union as their collective bargaining agent, and in the Church plant 51 of the 72 eligible also endorsed the AFL.

AFL AUTO WORKERS WIN

Fort Wayne, Ind.—The AFL's United Auto Workers Union secured a striking triumph in an NLRB election at the Spicer Manufacturing Co. here by defeating the CIO by a margin of 2 to 1. The successful campaign was directed by International Representative Alex Peterson, Regional Director Bernard Gilbert Jewell and Regional Director Earl Heston.

WORK SHIRTS COST MORE

Washington, D. C.—An increase of 2 to 3 cents in the retail price of work shirts was authorized by the OPA.

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service prints news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor appearing in the labor, industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the labor movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE
SUPPLEMENT

REGISTER! VOTE! ELECT A BETTER CONGRESS!

WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 1946 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

U. S. Acts to Avert Freight Car Crisis; Shutdowns of Factories and Job Losses

Washington, D. C.—Eight Government agencies, under direction of Reconversion Director John R. Steelman, joined in a concerted program here to avert a grave freight transportation crisis, factory shutdowns and job layoffs.

Col. J. Monroe Johnson, director of the Office of Defense Transportation, reported to Steelman that a shortage of freight cars confronted the Nation that present equipment is insufficient to handle the increasing flow of consumer supplies and the same factories will be forced to close or curtail operations this fall and winter unless the rail bottleneck is removed.

Johnson said he is preparing an order "to compel the railroads to handle freight cars with more efficiency," and that this order is aimed to make available some additional 70,000 cars weekly. Predicting a serious freight backlog, he said that "railroads will still be moving this year's wheat crop when the next crop ripens."

The freight car shortage was created by the war, Government experts said, and has been aggravated by the fact that postwar hauls are for shorter distances than during the war and tie up more cars on sidings.

Following a series of conferences, Steelman laid down a 7-point program directed to meet the expected requirements of 1,000,000 car loadings a day, which is 75,000 cars below present facilities. This program provides:

1. Where feasible, cross-country freight will be diverted from the rails to ships. The War Shipping Administration and the Maritime Commission will place more ships in coastal and intercoastal service.

2. The OPA will promptly review any increased costs incurred by shipyards in shifting from wartime transport and grant relief where necessary.

3. The Civilian Production Administration will speed the flow of scarce materials needed to repair about 80,000 old freight cars and build 40,000 new ones this year.

4. The State Department will seek quicker placement of foreign orders for freight cars to be built next year. Such a backlog, Mr. Steelman said, will encourage car manufacturers to speed production of domestic orders.

5. The ODT and the Agriculture Department will take joint action where perishable bottlenecks. Shipments of tin cans, sugar and other essential supplies to West Coast and midwestern canneries will be speeded. Action will also be taken to increase the flow of export grain and coal.

6. The ODT will encourage shippers and receivers to shorten further the turnaround time of cars by keeping shipping departments on a 6-day week and by using faster unloading methods.

7. The ODT will tighten its regulations governing less-than-carload-freight to force maximum use of all freight car space.

Steelman teamed up the following agencies in the program to meet the crisis: Office of Defense Transportation, the War Shipping Administration, the Maritime Commission, the National Housing Agency, the Civilian Production Administration, the Office of Price Administration, the Department of Agriculture and the State Department.

91,634,472 Voters In U. S. Is New Peak, Census Says

Washington, D. C.—An all-time record number of potential voters—91,634,472—will be eligible to cast their ballots in the November election, a survey by the Census Bureau revealed.

At the same time the bureau made known that the women 20 to 24 years of age at 21 as of July 1 outnumbered the men by 1,171,846. Two years ago the excess of women was placed at 730,810, and in 1940 it was as low as 72,603. C. Capt. Census Bureau director, said:

"Women seem destined to be increasingly influential in elections," the bureau commented in discussing the recent survey reports.

The recent drive launched by the American Federation of Labor to elect a better Congress and more labor-minded State legislatures will be reflected as much toward the feminine voters as toward the men.

Estimates of the number of persons 21 years and more on July 1, for three different years, as released by the Census Bureau, were as follows: 1940: men, 42,108,170; women, 42,-181,283; total, 84,289,453. 1945: men, 44,967,754; women, 45,231,262; total, 90,199,016. 1946: men, 45,631,262; women, 46,469,210.

The latest also showed that if all the persons of voting age in this country should cast their ballots in the November elections there would be about 2,500,000 more voters than those able to participate in the Presidential contest of 1944.

The potential voting strength, the bureau said, will be augmented by adding persons of the 20 to 24 age grid where voting starts at 18. These persons totaled about 2000,000 in the 1940 census.

Although 89,204,658 were presumably eligible to vote in 1944, only 47,976,263 cast ballots. This was 54 percent of those 21 years old and more. The 1944 figure represented a decline from the 49,830,320 who voted in 1940. The latter was surpassed by the setting of service men and considerable payments of the working population.

Small gains in voting strength occur in Presidential election years. For instance, in the general election of 1942 the total vote was about 29,500,000.

Since 1928, the bureau said, there has been a greater exercise of the voting privilege. In 1916, before women voted, 7 out of every 10 men went to the polls. In the Presidential year of 1920, however, with women casting ballots, less than half of the eligibles of both sexes voted. Again, in 1924, less than half of the voters went to the polls. From 1928 through 1940, the ratio increased to three-fifths of the total.

Hat Union Plans Big Label Drive

New York City.—The United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers Union (AFL) announced plans to make America's workers more "union label conscious" by a five-year nationwide educational campaign.

To insure a successful drive, President Max Zaritsky said, union members will contribute $3 a year to finance an educational broadside to include radio, movies, slide films, direct mail and newspaper advertising in labor publications. He made the point that "a business that does not advertise shouldn't be astonished if no customers come to the store."

Mr. Zaritsky said he wanted to bring the union label's attention to the minds of thousands of trade unionists, not only to promote patronage of our union label, but to bring greater appreciation of the sacrifice and achievements of the American labor movement which was the foundation of our modern streamlined organizations."

GRAIN PROCESSORS WIN GAINS FROM 6 BIG FIRMS

St. Louis, Mo.—Under a new agreement negotiated by the American Federation of Grain Processors (AFL) and six of the Nation's leading milling companies—12,000 members of the union were granted a union shop, the paid holidays at the full time rate if not worked and double time if worked, paid vacations, a 40-hour week provision, hearing security, an arbitration plan and other improved conditions.

Sam H. King, international vice-president and H. A. Schneider, secretary-treasurer, expressing deep satisfaction with the new agreement, said they felt that, "after many years, definite progress has been made and a satisfactory agreement secured that needs no apology."

The processing companies which were signatories to the new contract are: General Mills, Pillsbury, Consolidated Laramie, Russell-Miller, International and Standard.

Wage Board Lifts Pay for Builders

Washington, D. C.—Wages in the building field are being raised in scattered areas throughout the Nation.

The Wage Adjustment Board, which controls wages in the construction industry, is approving increases at the rate of 50 cases a day and reports a total of 1,200 cases.

Stabilization officials said the upward movement is taking place within the framework of wage controls in effect since February 24. They said it threatened neither the veterans' housing program nor the general wage stabilization program. The increases being granted are authorized as a means of offsetting higher living costs.

The construction wage cases were the first negotiated after the lapse of the 15 percent wage control law July 1.

Employers and union leaders were reported in agreement on the increases, which, however, were involved a boost of 25 cents an hour.

BUTCHERS IN SAN DIEGO SET UP WORKERS' CLINIC

San Diego, Calif.—Marking a new step in labor-management relations, Local 229 (AFL), Butcher Workmen (AFL), in cooperation with employers, has established a rehabilitation clinic for workers injured on the job, fatigue and other problems concerning workers and to seek their solution.

The union has set up a model kitchen to help the housewife efficiency that may be responsible for poor workmanship. Physical defects of workers will be studied and treatments arranged. If the treatments are of a prohibitive nature, or due to family problems, the union is a source of the community to cope with such matters will be employed.

Commenting on the experimental plan, Max Osslo, union secretary, said that "it is hoped to eliminate job physical condition, excellent working conditions and pleasant environment, both in the store and the job, are essential to efficient production."

INCREASED PRODUCTION SEEN AS PAY RAISE KEY

Washington, D. C.—A broad program for better housing and welfare is the chosen field of the American Federation of Labor, Boris Shishkin, secretary of the AFL Housing Committee, declared in an address before the National Conference of Catholic Charities at its session here.

This, Mr. Shishkin told the delegates, will be organized labor's contribution to a better America, better citizenship and greater spiritual growth in the years to come.

The housing crisis confronting the Nation, Mr. Shishkin declared, is a direct challenge to local communities throughout the country, and for this reason it becomes a challenge to American labor, because wage earners and their families are predominant in community life.

Two chief causes for the present shortage of building materials were cited by Mr. Shishkin—profiteers withholding materials for better prices and the tax law permitting firms which engaged in war work to ask refunds for 'relative losses" this year over a base year—a practice described as an incentive to low production.

Washington, D. C.—Action was taken here to expedite the veterans' housing program, which had bogged down through a shortage of materials and the failure of Congress to pass the Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill, to provide housing bill as the members raced home to plead for reelection.

The vets' housing program was given fresh impetus by a 27 percent slash in nonresidential construction to channel needed materials into commercial projects to home building.

Civilian Production Administrator John D. Small announced he will

Wages at New High In Durable Field

Washington, D. C.—Average hourly earnings of $1.17 in the durable goods industries in June set a new high record, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports. Average June hourly earnings amounted to $46.43, the highest since June 19'5, when the work week was 5 hours longer. The average June 1946 work week was 39.8 hours.

The bureau also reported average hourly earnings in manufacturing industries advanced 1.3 cents over May to $1.68, and, as a result of the widespread resumption of production that month, brought the highest weekly earnings in 11 months. Preliminary estimates for July indicated further gains to $1.69 per hour.

In the nondurable goods group, average hourly earnings exceeded $1 for the first time on record and the average weekly earnings maintained the 40 level for the fourth successive month.

New York Officials Rap Trainee Ruling

New York City.—Cancellation or drastic curtailment of trainee and other on-the-job veterans' training programs will be required in this State under the Veterans Administration's new interpretation of the new law limiting Federal subsidies to training programs, State Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi and Edward J. Neary, director of the State Division of Veterans' Affairs, declared in a joint statement.

All on-the-job training programs, under the VA interpretation, whether approved before or after the law became effective August 24, would be limited to two years. The law places a ceiling on trainees' income because veterans will not receive any government assistance. That ceiling is $175 a month for veterans with no dependents and $200 for those with dependents.

The two officials contended that the high cost of living in States like New York made it unfair to apply to them the same income ceiling that was fixed for other parts of the country.

Strike Time Loss Hits Postwar Low

Washington, D. C.—Working time lost through labor-management disputes in July was less than in any month since the end of the war, although the number of strikes was higher than in any month this year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. The large number of small wage disputes, the agency said, followed the general trend of activity since the end of June when living costs began declining.

About 185,000 workers were involved in the 480 strikes beginning in July. It was estimated 1,800,000 man-days, plus 320 which already were in progress on July 1, involving 865,000 workers, brought the total to 2,800,000 man-days.

SOAP SHORTAGE CONTINUES

New York City—Supplies of soap will continue short for many months, industry sources here reported. They said soap supplies are shorter than at any time during the war, due to essential to efficient production."

Housing Improvement and Welfare Selected Fields of American Labor

South Bend, Ind.—A broad program for better housing and welfare is the chosen field of the American Federation of Labor, Boris Shishkin, secretary of the AFL Housing Committee, declared in an address before the National Conference of Catholic Charities at its session here.

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Civilian Production Administrator John D. Small announced he will transfer control over all non-residential construction, except industrial, to Federal Housing Expediter Wilson W. Wyatt.

Pending complete transfer, Small said, office, store, factory and other non-housing construction will be cut from $45,000,000 a week to $35,000,000. The transfer, expected to require several weeks, involves the shift of some 1,500 employes of the CPA and the funds supporting construction activities in that agency to Wyatt's office.

The National Housing Agency, headed by Wyatt, announced that new regulations, increasing the "critical list" of materials from 20 to 57, will not affect applications already approved or make any "fundamental" change in the priorities system.

The new shift, determined upon after a series of conferences between Small and Wyatt, will start off a "whole series of steps" to get dwellings now under construction finished before winter, Small told reporters.

"It is my feeling," he said, "that we should turn handsprings if necessary to get these houses finished before the snow flies."

At the same time Small urged householders to defer repairs under the $400 limit, which is exempt from Federal control, to facilitate the veterans' housing program.

Under the decisions reached by Small and Wyatt, greater volumes of materials, ranging from 75 percent on sinks to 95 percent on bathtubs, will be set aside by manufacturers and dealers for sale only to builders who hold the "HH," or housing, priority.

The 27 materials added to the "critical list" include stoves, linoleum, and lighting fixtures. Seventy-five percent of all soft lumber must be reserved for priority buyers.

YOUR TAXES AND MINE

This is the eighth of a series of 12 articles on tax problems affecting every person in the Nation, written for the AFL Weekly News Service by Arthur A. Elder, tax consultant of the AFL's Tax Committee and a vice president of the American Federation of Teachers.

What Are the Best Taxes?

Why pay taxes, anyway? Here's one simple explanation: We pay taxes to do those things for ourselves through government that we cannot do as well as individuals.

What taxes are best? Tax authorities rate them, from the standpoint of justice and sound economics, as follows:

BEST: Graduated taxes on income, based on ability to pay.

The federal government and 31 states levy personal income taxes. 32 states levy corporation income taxes. This is the fairest tax. It does not interfere least with consumption, and because it follows the principle of "ability to pay." In some states, the state taxing power is used to raise revenue which is shared with cities and other local governments.

NEXT BEST: **Taxes on property.**

Despite many complaints about the property tax, it remains the basic support for local government. Moves to cut down on it should be made only after carefully to see whether the major benefits go to home owners or to industry. There should be no discrimination against industry, but it should pay its fair share for the services it uses.

Home owners, whose property may represent 30% of the local property valuation in an industrial community, will have nothing if the property tax is reduced, while they pay the bulk of the sales or excise tax levied to take the place of the property taxes.

If real estate taxes are insufficient to meet the needs of the community, it will be well to shift some of the tax burden to personal property which is assessed at its full worth, and to compare local tax rates with those paid in comparable cities.

WORST: **Sales tax, excise tax, payroll tax.**

Since these are not based on "ability to pay," and take a larger proportion of the poor man's income, they are least desirable.

Spaatz Lauds Labor

By GENERAL CARL SPAATZ
Commander of the Army Air Forces

On Labor Day of 1946 we look back upon a year of peace. Millions of Americans, both in the Armed Forces and out, participated in the winning of that year and the years of peace to come. Wherever they were needed, they served.

Many of those Americans served in the ranks of labor. They formed a vital part of the gigantic production team that made victory possible. To them the debt of the Army Air Forces is particularly great. The hundreds of thousands of airplanes, the great weight of bombs, and the long list of intricately complex equipment that helped to win the war, all testify to the skill and sweat of labor to overwhelm our enemies.

Labor did more. It sent thousands of men to serve in our ranks, many of them with the highest skills developed by experience in the air. The true measure of our debt is the greatness of the victory won.

Today, therefore, we of the Army Air Forces mark Labor Day with gratitude for the high quality of the contribution of American labor to American victory.

JUNE LUMBER PRODUCTION 2.6 PERCENT ABOVE MAY

Washington.—The Civilian Production Administration has announced that softwood lumber production in June increased 2.6 percent over that of May for a total of 2,154,207,000 board feet. The greatest increases were recorded in the States of Nevada and California where production was up 21 percent over May, and in the southern Rocky Mountain States a 12.4 percent increase was recorded.

The Federal Reserve Board said that its industrial index of production was upped three points to 174 during the month of July. The cutput of durable goods and minerals gradually increased but there was little change in nondurable manufactures. Nonagricultural employment was on the upgrade and total employment decreased to about 2,800,000.

U. S. WORKERS TO CONVENE

St. Paul, Minn.—A special convention of the American Federation of Government Employes (AFL) will open here September 16, the first one to be held by this organization since 1941.

'BIG JOHN' LUNDERGAN OF RAIL SIGNALMEN DIES

Buffalo.—John Lundergan, "Big John" to his associates in the Switchmen's Union (AFL), which he served for nearly 20 years as vice president, died of a cerebral hemorrhage while he was stricken on a Lackawanna train here en-route from Elmira to his home here.

"Big John" was born in Elmira August 5, 1875, attended the local public schools and was forced to quit at 15 to go to work.

His first job was in a tea store at $2 a week. His rail career began in 1900 in the car department of the newly organized Erie railroad. He entered switching service on the same road and the following year joined the Elmira lodge of the Switchmen's Union.

A loyal and devoted unionist, Lundergan rose through all offices of the local lodge and in 1918 was elected secretary of the adjustment committee on the Lackawanna system. He held that office until elected vice president in the year 1927. He was reelected at all subsequent conventions.

58 Million Employed Sets New Record In American Industries

UNEMPLOYMENT WANES IN CHIEF LABOR AREAS, DIRECTOR OF USES SAYS

Washington, D. C.—Marked employment gains in many key areas of the Nation in July were reported by Robert C. Goodwin, director of the United States Employment Service, who made public figures showing that the country faces a general labor shortage.

A survey by the USES showed employment increases in about two-thirds of the 96 major labor markets, Goodwin said, and 82 of the 96 reported optimistically on employment prospects for the next few months. In many of these scattered areas experts said they expected sizable expansions in various industries.

Goodwin said that although employment had risen progressively in recent months to new peacetime peaks, no general shortage of labor had developed, even though shortages of skilled workers in certain occupations had been reported from some areas.

Discussing employment prospects, Goodwin said that the tightness in selected skills which has featured the labor market during the first half of 1946 would no doubt become even more noticeable in the immediate future.

"Unsatisfied needs for labor are being reported in considerable volume from many industries and communities, and a general spirit of optimism is causing an expectation that an over-all labor shortage is in development" he said.

"But so far we have by no means fully utilized our human and other available labor resources. Sizable pools of unemployed men still exist in many areas in spite of the high level of employment levels and are fairly important in a few war-expanded communities.

"Before it can be said that this country has a general labor shortage, unemployment must be reduced below the current level of 2,270,000 workers reported by the Bureau of the Census."

N. Y. State Expands Labor Services

New York City.—A comprehensive analysis of the provisions of collective bargaining agreements in all industries in the State covering both unions and employers as a contribution to peaceful labor-management relations, Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi announced.

At the same time the Commissioner revealed that a new division has been established as part of a fact-finding and training program to assist labor and management in working out mutual problems. An annual budget of $100,000 and a staff of 58, including 25 technicians, has been assigned to the new division, directed by Dr. C. A. Pearce, former statistical expert and chief of the Regional War Labor Boards.

In addition to its study of collective bargaining practices, the division will keep a record of the causes and outcome of strikes, will prepare a directory of labor unions and of employers in all parts of the State and will build up a library of published and unpublished material dealing with labor and industrial problems.

Commissioner Corsi indicated he expected to ask the research division to "enlarge its functions" to embrace the subject of the guaranteed annual wage. The advisory council of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion is currently carrying on a Federal study in this field.

REYNOLDS, ONCE LABORER; NEW MEMBER OF NLRB

Washington, D. C.—James J. Reynolds, who, at 27, held a seat on the New York Stock Exchange and quit later to become a day laborer for the U. S. Pipe and Foundry Co., was sworn in here as a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

Reynolds, a protege of Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York, author of the Wagner Act, replaces Gerard Reilly, Boston lawyer who declined reappointment for another 5-year term. He took the oath from Judge J. Warren Madden of the U. S. Court of Claims, first chairman of the NLRB.

Reynolds was educated in the New York City public schools and Columbia University. From his job as laborer with the U. S. Pipe and Foundry he went to the post of personnel director, in charge of labor relations. He was in the Navy in a labor relations capacity and was a commander when he went on the inactive list last spring.

FRESNO COUNCIL ON AIR

Fresno, Calif.—The Fresno Trades and Labor Council has launched a weekly series of radio programs over Station KYKC. The broadcasts will be held Fridays each week from 6 to 6:15 p.m.

Peacetime Production Nearing War Peak, CPA Report Shows

Washington, D. C.—Civilian goods are streaming out of America's industrial plants at a rate closely approaching the war-time peak and civilian employment has reached the unprecedented total of 58,100,000.

These facts were disclosed in a report by Civilian Production Administrator John D. Small, who declared that producers of basic materials have reached their virtual capacity. Factories now are "within sight" of full production of finished goods, he said.

The expansion of factory and commercial activity was highlighted by reports showing that the entire industrial output of workers over June was in nonfarming jobs.

Despite this "full employment," Small estimated that more than 5,000,000 workers—3,000,000 women and 2,000,000 men—have withdrawn from the labor force in the single year since VJ-Day. The term "labor force" covers those in the armed services as well as those in civilian employment.

The gross national product—the value of the country's productive effort, in 1939 dollars—hit a $130,000,000,000 annual rate in the April-May-June quarter, a 17 percent increase over 1941, the CPA director said.

"A somewhat larger increase is now indicated for the third quarter, which may bring gross national product in line with the peacetime all-time peak of $142,000,000,000," the report predicted.

The peak was the second quarter of last year, the period of all-out arms production climaxed by Germany's surrender.

July gains of 56 percent over June in the output of automobiles and 58 percent in trucks were highlights of what Small called "the generally bright picture of consumer goods shipments." Passenger cars reached the 200,000 mark, while 93,000 trucks were produced.

He reported that production of sewing machines jumped 30 percent to 35,000, electric ranges 24 percent to 57,000 and further increases in refrigerators, radio and vacuum cleaners.

Output of 6,000,000 tons of steel ingots was the highest of this year, with operations at 90 percent of capacity, but July shipments of finished steel products would not exceed June, Small said, because of the regular July vacation period, the usual hot weather slump and the freight car shortage.

Hosiery production reached the highest point since VJ-Day, Mr. Small reported, 168,000,000 pairs in the second quarter. Nylons accounted for 60 percent at the quarter's end. Silk-stocking production increased 33 percent in June over May.

The report said that while building was still increasing, the upward trend was growing smaller each month, dropping from a 10 percent increase in June over May to 8 percent last month over June.

However, with Civilian Production Administration limitations on non-residential construction, home building has taken a 9 percent larger slice of the total output stated. Shortage of rolling stock was reported as holding up movement of some materials.

Improvements were reported in shipments of builders' hardware and cast-iron soil pipe.

Other items on the deficit side of Mr. Small's report included shoe production, 13 percent below June levels and the second successive monthly decrease.

Cotton broad-woven goods dropped slightly to a weekly average of 197,900,000 yards, as compared with a June average of 182,900,000 yards.

On the other hand, men's suit production reached an annual rate in June of 22,600,000, with weekly output of woolens setting an all-time record of 12,400,000 yards.

The report showed production of 55,000,000 to 75,000,000 men's shirts during the second quarter, including about 25,000,000 dress and business shirts and 40,000,000 sports shirts.

FRUIT PACKERS GRANTED 15-CENT HOURLY RAISE

Wash'gton.—A 15-cents-an-hour wage increase for fruit packing workers in the Yakima Valley of Washington State has been approved by Reconversion Director John R. Steelman.

Approximately 5,200 workers are affected by the increase and by varying increases approved for piece workers. This action was taken on recommendation of the Secretary of Agriculture. These are the first increases granted these workers since August, 1944.